



LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Forgives and Heals

SCRIPTURE: Mark 2

WORD OF WONDER: From Matthew 11:28

The Bible gives account after account of miracles Jesus did while walking on earth. Sometimes we read through these familiar stories and lose sight of the true power that Jesus demonstrated.

Read Mark 2:1–12. In this passage, we learn about the time when Jesus, teaching in a crowded house, healed a man who was paralyzed. Can you imagine what it would have been like to be in the crowd that day? The physical healing of this man is impressive, but the spiritual healing, the forgiving of the man's sins—that demonstrated the type of power that the religious onlookers found offensive. Jesus' power isn't merely for physical healing or forgiveness. Jesus has power for both.

When we recognize Jesus' power over sin and His complete defeat of death, we too can experience the spiritual healing Jesus offers. First John 1:9 tells us that if we confess our sins, Jesus is faithful and just to forgive our sins. Only Jesus has the power to forgive.

Take a moment to rest in awe of Jesus' power. In what part of your life do you most want to see Jesus work today? There is nothing we face in this world that is more powerful than Jesus. What an amazing truth we can rest in as we walk with Jesus!

—**Ana Dutton**

Children's Ministry

Volunteer Contributor to

Wonder Ink

LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

JESUS HEALS THE MAN WHO IS PARALYZED

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Teachers of the law, or scribes, were experts in the law of Moses and in traditions about how the law should be applied. They were responsible for teaching others, especially children, how to read and understand the Scriptures. Some scribes were also Jewish religious leaders called *Pharisees*.

WHAT?

While Jesus taught inside a crowded house in Capernaum, four people dug out a hole in the roof to lower down a man who could not walk. Jesus forgave the man's sins and then healed him, demonstrating His authority to the teachers of the law.

WHERE?

Jesus' early ministry took place in the region of Galilee, north of Jerusalem and the region of Judea. Capernaum was a town in Galilee located on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus used it as a home base.

WHEN?

This story comes early in Jesus' ministry. Jesus had begun preaching about God's kingdom and had called His first disciples. Because Jesus cast out demons and healed many sick people, word about Him started to spread, and large crowds found Him wherever He went.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Jesus inaugurated God's kingdom and made a way for all people to be part of it. This story demonstrates Jesus' power to forgive sins and to heal—that is, to bring about the realities of God's kingdom, which was beginning to break through.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: small interlocking plastic blocks or magnetic blocks; toy people figures; coloring utensils

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?

Play Station: Build a House

Set-up: Set out small interlocking plastic blocks or magnetic blocks and toy people figures.

Play: Allow kids to use the various blocks to build houses for the toy people. Kids can put the people in or on top of the houses. Challenge the kids to see if they can build a set of stairs going to the roof!



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Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, thank You for loving us and caring for us. Thank You for Your great power that can heal our bodies and forgive our sins. Through the power of Your Spirit, please teach us today about Jesus' amazing power to forgive and heal. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? The Bible

Ask: Why is the Bible special? Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.

Tell the Bible Story

The Beginner's Bible, pages 328-333

A Hole in the Roof

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

Come to me, all who are tired. I will give you rest.

—from Matthew 11:28

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Why did the friends have to carry the man to see Jesus?** (*He couldn't walk.*)
- **Why couldn't the man and his four friends get to Jesus easily?** (*Lots of people came to see Jesus. The house where Jesus was teaching was full of people. There wasn't room even to stand outside the door and listen.*)
- **What did the friends of the man do to get him to Jesus?** (*They dug a hole in the roof and lowered the man through it on a mat.*)
- **When Jesus saw the man on the mat, what did He say to him?** (*"Son, your sins are forgiven"* [Mark 2:5], and then later, *"Get up. Take your mat and go home"* [Mark 2:11].)
- **What is a miracle?** (*something that only God can do*)
- **Jesus has power to heal and forgive each of us! How does that make you feel?**
- **Have you ever been healed? Do you know someone who has been healed?**

When Jesus saw the faith of the man and his friends, Jesus forgave and healed him. Jesus has power to forgive and heal because He is God.



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Game: Carry with a Friend

SUPPLIES: pool noodles (2, or 4 if your group is large), balloon or beach ball (1, or 2 if your group is large)

The man's friends carried him to Jesus. Today we will use pool noodles to carry a balloon (or beach ball) from one side of the room to the other! After the friends carried the man to Jesus, Jesus forgave and healed him!

Have the kids find a partner. Each set of partners will face each other and hold the end of two pool noodles in each hand. The pool noodles will be parallel to each other. A balloon (or beach ball) will be placed on the top center of the pool noodles between the partners. The kids will balance and hold the pool noodles just close enough together so that the balloon (or beach ball) will not fall. A pair of leaders can demonstrate if needed.

Designate a place in the room for the kids to start and finish, and point out the spots to the kids. You can use the lines from the three-legged race during this activity. Indicate a shorter distance to travel for groups of young kids. If the group is large, allow multiple partners to go at the same time and have a race. To add a challenge, kids can go back to the starting point if they drop their balloon (or beach ball) and begin again.

Make It Inclusive! This game may be physically challenging for some kids. As an alternative, allow kids to hold their arms straight out and see if they can hold a balloon (or beach ball) on or between their arms without using their hands. You can also allow them to carry the balloon by holding a towel on each end instead of holding pool noodles.



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Responding in Worship: Friendship Bracelets

SUPPLIES: pipe cleaners (1 per kid), pony beads (12 per kid)

For our worship response, we're going to make friendship bracelets! The man had wonderful friends who worked hard to bring him to Jesus and had faith that he could be healed. Our friendship bracelets will help us remember this story and know that Jesus forgives and heals!

Give each kid a pipe cleaner and 12 pony beads.

Let's close our eyes. The man's friends helped him. Can you think of a time you helped a friend? You don't have to answer aloud. Just think in your mind. Provide time for kids to think and process. Now open your eyes. Since the man on the mat had four friends, let's add four beads to your pipe cleaner.

Now, let's close our eyes again and think of a time a friend helped you. Provide time for kids to think and process. Open your eyes and add two more beads to your pipe cleaner.

You can close your eyes again now. Jesus healed the man! Can you think in your mind and thank God for a time when you were sick, and He healed you? Provide time for kids to think and process. Open your eyes and add two more beads to your pipe cleaner.

We can thank God for how He heals and forgives us. Next, let's close our eyes and think of a time you forgave someone, or someone asked you to forgive her. We can thank God for how He forgives. Provide time for kids to think and process. Open your eyes and now add two more beads to your pipe cleaner.

Finally, we'll close our eyes one last time and ask God to help us forgive others as He forgives us. Provide time for kids to think and process. Open your eyes and now add two more beads to your pipe cleaner.

Assist the kids with completing the bracelets by twisting the ends of the pipe cleaner together. You can also use string instead of pipe cleaners. **Your friendship bracelets are beautiful! As you wear your bracelet, let it remind you of the man's faithful friends. And even more importantly, may it remind you that Jesus heals and forgives us!**



Leader Tip: Consider giving the beads to the kids only two at a time (or four for the first prompt) instead of all at the beginning so that they will not feel rushed to put them all on at once. This way, they can spend more time focused on the worship response prompts.